(WASHINGTON) - Congressman Chet Edwards announced that vital renewable energy research at Texas A&M University will be bolstered by federal funds he included in the final 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, which passed the House today 308 to 114. Edwards is vice chair of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, and was a member of the House-Senate conference committee that wrote the final bill.

"Texas A&M is a global leader in engineering and agricultural research, and developing more renewable domestic energy sources will not only help lessen our dependence on foreign oil, it will improve our economy, protect the environment, and plan for the future in a responsible manner," **said Edwards**. "*This research enhances our ability to produce, harvest, and convert billions of tons of biomass as a sustainable fuel, which will strengthen our domestic energy independence."*

"*We are very appreciative of Congressman Edward's leadership in advancing research and development of alternative sources of energy* ," **said Dr. G. Kemble Bennett, vice chancellor and dean of Texas A&M Engineering** . "*With his help, we have developed and licensed technology to convert biomass and biowaste directly to high-octane gasoline, and have many other biofuels processing technologies developing in our labs, as well. Congressman Edwards has been instrumental in furthering Texas A&M's energy research activities and the related educational opportunities they provide for our future engineering workforce*
."

"*Texas AgriLife Research has one of the leading programs in the nation developing sustainable systems for low carbon feedstocks for biofuels production. Our sorghum biofuels research program, with this funding provided through Congressman Edward's efforts, could be a significant component in this country's low carbon renewable energy future* ," said **Dr. Mark Hussey, Vice Chancellor and Dean of Agriculture**
.

Specifically, Edwards secured $1 million for Texas A&M cellulosic ethanol research that will help respond to the worldwide need to develop the next generation of clean, renewable alternative energy sources. In Texas, sorghum is plentiful, energy efficient and drought resistant, and Texas A&M researchers have determined that sorghum plants, which are over 20 feet in height, hold the most promise for biofuel production in Texas and the South. Cellulosic ethanol produced from sorghum is considered a more efficient biofuel than ethanol produced from corn. The objective of this program is to develop a comprehensive strategy for growing high-tonnage sorghums and energy canes for conversion into biofuels including conventional fuels: gasoline, jet fuel, and diesel.

The program is a joint effort by Texas AgriLife Research and the Texas Engineering Experiment Station through the Texas A&M Agriculture and Engineering Bioenergy Alliance. The final 2010

Energy and Water bill is expected to pass the Senate, and be sent to the president for his signature.

-30-